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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Edelman Bids Farewell - Milliyet 3/19
Edelman Resigns, Will Leave Ankara in June - Hurriyet 3/19
US Ambassador Edelman Resigns - Aksam 3/19
Erdogan to Visit Israel, Palestine in May - Sabah
Rumsfeld Blames Turkey Again - Aksam
Talabani Agrees With Shiites on Status of Kirkuk - Milliyet
3/20
Another Turkish Truck Driver Killed in Iraq - Hurriyet
Bush Claims Iraq War Made US Safer - Hurriyet 3/20
Papadopoulos Asks UN to Restart Negotiations - Sabah 3/20
Civil War Fear in Lebanon - Aksam 3/20
Annan Regards Safety of US As Key Priority for UN - Milliyet

OPINION MAKERS

Edelman Resigns, May Replace Feith at Pentagon - Cumhuriyet
3/19
Edelman Leaves Post in June - Zaman 3/19
Edelman to Leave in June - Yeni Safak 3/19
Anti-Iraq War Demos Show Global Resistance Against US -
Cumhuriyet 3/20
Bush Says Iraq Occupied for Freedom - Cumhuriyet 3/20
Thousands Take to Streets in US to Condemn Iraq War -
Cumhuriyet
Bush Says Iraq War Inspired Democracy in the Region - Zaman
3/20
Jordan Sentences Zarkawi to 15 Years in Jail - Yeni Safak
Support for EU Constitution Declines in France - Zaman

BRIEFING

Ambassador Edelman Leaves Post, US Foreign Service: US
Ambassador Eric Edelman has resigned from both his post in
Ankara and the US foreign service. Edelman will be leaving
Turkey at the end of June, weekend papers report. Most
dailies speculate that Edelman will likely replace either
Paul Wolfowitz or Douglas Feith at the Defense Department or
be appointed as national security advisor to President Bush.
Weekend papers quote State Department Spokesman Adam Ereli
and US Ankara Embassy officials as rejecting claims that the
resignation is related to controversies sparked by Edelman's
remarks on Turkey's approach to Syria and the upcoming trip
by President Sezer to Damascus. Ambassador Edelman told
"Milliyet" over the weekend that "when the time comes for me
to leave Turkey, whether it is for another position in
government or for the private sector, I will always consider
myself a friend of Turkey, and will seek ways to contribute
to the relationship between the United States and Turkey."

Rumsfeld Blames Turkey for Blocking US Troop Deployment to
Iraq: Turkish media quote Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld
as expressing regret that US troops had been prevented from
entering the north of Iraq through Turkey in 2003. Rumsfeld
blamed the Turkish decision for enabling the post-war
insurgency in Iraq to flourish. "If we had been able to get
the 4th Infantry Division in from the north through Turkey,
more Baathist regime supporters would have been captured or
killed, and the insurgency today would be less intense,"
Rumsfeld said.

US Diplomats Frequent Parliament to Convince MPs: Islamist-
oriented "Yeni Safak" claimed on Sunday that diplomats from
the US Embassy in Ankara have visited more than 50
lawmakers, mostly from the ruling AK Party, to assure them
that the United States will not allow the establishment of a
Kurdish state in northern Iraq. The American diplomats also
stressed that US support for the Turkish Cypriots would
continue, and warned that Turkey should be careful in its

relations with Syria and Iran. The Americans also took the pulse of lawmakers to determine their flexibility on a possible new parliamentary motion that would enable Turkey to facilitate US operations in Iraq, "Yeni Safak" reports. Some of the parliamentarians complained that the United States has not provided enough support for Turkey, and urged American diplomats to work harder with regard to Cyprus and the PKK presence in northern Iraq.

Ankara Suggests 'Bulgarian Model' for Iraqi Turkmen: Turkey's special Iraq representative, Osman Koruturk, told "Milliyet" that Ankara has adopted a new policy regarding the Iraqi Turkmen. Turkey will advise the Turkmen in Iraq to reorganize themselves politically within Iraq's new democratic system in order to make their influence felt in Baghdad. Koruturk said the Turkmen could follow the path of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria, which has succeeded in acquiring rights within the Bulgarian political process. Without giving an impression of being manipulated by Turkey, the Bulgarian Turks have defined themselves within the Bulgarian national identity and allowed non-Turkish Bulgarians to join their 'Rights and Freedoms Movement.'

Demonstrators Protest Iraq War: Several hundred people took to the streets in Turkish cities Saturday to protest the war in Iraq, weekend papers report. In protest rallies organized by political parties and trade unions, demonstrators denounced the 'occupation' of Iraq in Ankara, Istanbul, and Adana, the Turkish provinces that host US diplomatic missions. Millions of protestors attended anti-war demonstrations around the world, including in Turkey, to voice support for the 'legitimate resistance of the Iraqi people,' says "Yeni Safak."

'Nevruz' Festival Marked in Turkish Provinces: Thousands of Turkey's Kurds marked the 'Nevruz' festival in Istanbul, Izmir, Mersin and Adana in rallies organized by pro-Kurdish HADEP (Democratic People's Party) over the weekend. Some groups hoisted PKK/Kongra Gel flags and chanted slogans in support of jailed PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan. Around 40,000 Kurds joined the Nevruz celebrations held in Mersin, where six demonstrators were injured in scuffles with police. The demonstrations in most cities were peaceful, but there were a number of arrests.

PM Erdogan Due to Visit Israel: Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan is to visit Israel in early May in an effort to defuse the strain in bilateral ties caused by Erdogan's harsh criticism of Tel Aviv. The Prime Minister had previously accused Israel of using 'state terrorism' in the occupied territories. A high-level Israeli official said the recent visit to Israel by FM Abdullah Gul has helped to repair damage in the relationship, and stressed that Erdogan's call in Tel Aviv would help to shape the future of Turkey-Israel relations.

Another Turkish Truck Driver Killed in Iraq: Another Turkish truck driver was shot to death in Iraq over the weekend. The driver was killed in an attack by insurgents north of the Iraqi town of Beyci. He was driving in a convoy under the protection of US soldiers.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Syria; US-Turkish Relations

"Two Years of Occupation"
The leftist nationalist "Cumhuriyet" carried this op-ed (3/21): "President Bush defended the occupation of Iraq and talked about the liberation of Iraq while the US action was being protested on a global scale. These opposing viewpoints require a closer intellectual examination. The logic espoused by President Bush was that 'threats against the United States must be overcome before they result in attacks' This sums up the reality of the new world order. . Bush, in a very clear way, repeatedly mentioned the threats against the US and talked about taking action. This logic seems to apply mostly to the Muslim world at the moment, but in fact it is valid for potential threats all around the world. The new world order stands on this principle. The US has declared its right to occupy any country that may seem dangerous. All of this brings a question to one's mind: is Turkey exempt, or does this general rule apply here as well? . Political colonialism ended in the aftermath of World War II. However, economic colonialism continues to exist as a natural consequence of capitalism. Developing nations are in trouble. This is another aspect of the new world order: the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. Problems will only increase as technology develops and the world becomes more globalized. As time goes by, the real reasons behind the rhetoric claiming that the US is 'under threat' will be clearly understood."

"Who Lost American Support?"
Ali Aslan observed from Washington in the Islamist/intellectual "Zaman" (3/21): "I am not going to discuss whether or not Amb. Edelman was a good Ambassador in

Ankara. This would be inappropriate and not in keeping with the tradition of Turkish hospitality. Edelman's work performance is a matter more important for Washington than for Turkey, and as far as I know, Edelman's superiors are very happy with his work. I can tell you in advance that his resignation does not mean he will be in a reduced position. On the contrary, his position in Ankara was a stepping stone for higher positions, either in government or the private sector. Moreover, let me stress that Edelman came to Washington last week just for a day to negotiate with the Pentagon for the Wolfowitz position. Who are the people in Turkey who have tried to prevent Edelman from doing his job? In other words, 'who lost US support?' Not many of the answers to this question are coming from Turkey. However, I can assure you that this question is still debated intensely here in Washington. The neo-cons counted on Turkey's political leadership to guarantee strong ties between the US and Turkey. Previous Turkish governments that couldn't maintain a good relationship with the neo-cons were never very successful. Moreover, the neo-cons are having their 'golden age' in US foreign policy. Despite reactions from the international community, President Bush has assigned Paul Wolfowitz and John Bolton (two well known neo-cons) to key positions at the World Bank and the United Nations. If there are still some people in Turkey who want to be friends with the US, let me highlight for them that the road to the White House goes through the neo-cons."

"Tough Times for Turkey in Washington"
Asli Aydintasbas wrote in the mass appeal "Sabah" (3/21):
"It is clear that the Ambassador's decision to leave Turkey was not related to developments here. As Embassy officials have noted, this was a personal decision related to the Ambassador's desire to start a 'second career' outside the diplomatic service. He has a number of offers from the private sector, and appears to be the leading candidate to replace Douglas Feith at the Pentagon. But putting this aside, there is no question that his resignation will have ramifications in Washington, because many people there who follow Turkey believe there was a serious effort to 'run their man out of town.' Washington observers are well aware of the campaign that started against Edelman before he ever set foot in Turkey. They know he was attacked several times each week in the headlines of (mostly marginal) newspapers. They know that some were even calling for the Ambassador to be declared 'persona non grata.' Although the Ambassador says he will still work to improve US-Turkish relations, these issues will continue to be discussed in Washington, with negative implications for Ankara. Another negative from this development is that much of the embassy's expertise on Turkey will be leaving Ankara in a very short period of time. In addition to Edelman, Deputy Chief of Mission Robert Deutsch and Political Counselor John Kunstadter - both of whom know Turkey very well - will also depart this summer. Someone who follows Turkish issues in Washington told me that he 'wouldn't be surprised' if the US Government 'holds off for a while' in appointing a new ambassador. Meanwhile, the Turkish Government is desperately trying to get the relationship back on track. Murat Mercan will be traveling to Washington this week to deliver the message that Turkish policy is neither 'anti-American' nor 'pro-Arab.' The Government believes its problems are being caused by a relatively small circle in Washington. But Turkish leaders should understand that Turkish policy on issues like Iraq and Lebanon is being examined by a much wider group within the US policy apparatus. We need to recognize that it will take more than nice words to fix this relationship. It will take real policy decisions that show that Turkey is acting in accordance with the two countries' mutual interests."

EDELMAN